

VERA/VSIP: ELIGIBILITY

1. What are the basic age and service requirements for early voluntary retirement?

An employee must be at least age 50 and completed at least 20 years of creditable service, or any age and completed at least 25 years of creditable service. Five years of service must be creditable civilian service.

2. Are there additional requirements to be eligible to retire under VERA?

In addition to the basic age and service requirements, an employee must have continuously served in the Department of Justice since December 28, 2009, and served in a position covered by this authority since April 16, 2010, under a permanent appointment with a regularly scheduled tour of duty. This authority excludes employees currently serving in a GS-0083 Police Officer, GS-132 Intelligence Analyst, GS-1811 Special Agent, GS-X99 Student Trainee, GS-1601 General Facilities and Equipment, GS-1640 Facility Management, and SES positions.

An employee must also have at least five years of creditable civilian service under CSRS or FERS rules and separate from a position subject to CSRS or FERS retirement deductions.

If covered under the CSRS, the employee must meet the "1-out-of-2" requirements. This means the employee has been covered by CSRS deductions for at least 1 year within the 2-year period immediately preceding the separation on which the annuity is based. The one year of service does not have to be continuous. The year of service does, however, have to be **covered** service (subject to CSRS retirement deductions). An employee cannot meet the requirement by paying a deposit for nondeduction service.

3. How much is a VSIP?

Under the 2010 authority, the FBI will authorize the maximum payment allowed, which is \$25,000 **or** an amount equal to the severance pay an employee would be entitled to receive, whichever is less (see severance pay calculation in next question). This payment is subject to applicable taxes and Social Security deductions.

Also, an incentive payment may be reduced for outstanding employee debts, including:

- debt owed to the FBI;
- commercial garnishment (including supplemental fees or court-ordered interest);
- alimony covered by a court order; and/or
- child support covered by a court order.

4. How is the maximum incentive payment allowed determined?

The incentive payment under the authority will be the **lesser** of \$25,000 or severance pay. If an employee's severance pay computation is more than \$25,000, the full incentive of \$25,000 will be authorized. Severance pay is determined as follows:

One week of basic pay times each full year of creditable service up through 10 years:

_____ x _____ = _____ plus

Two weeks of basic pay times each full year of creditable service beyond 10 years:

_____ x _____ = _____ plus

25% of applicable amount (1 weeks pay or 2 weeks pay) times each full 3 months of creditable service beyond the final full year:

_____ x _____ = _____ plus

Age adjustment allowance of 2.5 percent for each full quarter of a year employee is over 40 years of age at retirement:

_____ x _____ = _____

Total (maximum amount of severance pay may not exceed one year's salary (52 weeks)):

Note: The weekly rate of basic pay for employees with variable work schedules (i.e., part-time) is determined based on the weekly average for the last position held by the employee during the 26 biweekly pay periods immediately preceding separation.

5. What are the service requirements for the incentive payment?

Under the VSIP authority, eligible employees may separate to accept the incentive payment by optional retirement and voluntary early retirement. The service requirements for each are as follows, with each requiring at least five years of creditable civilian service:

- Voluntary early retirement, at least:
 - Age 50 with 20 years of service
 - Any age with 25 years of service
- Optional/Regular Retirement
 - Age 62 with 5 years of service
 - Age 60 with 20 years of service
 - MRA (Between age 55 and 57, based on year and month of birth) with 10 years of service (FERS only, reduced annuity)
 - MRA (between age 55 and 57, based on year and month of birth) with 30 years of service (FERS only)
 - Age 55 with 30 years of service (CSRS only)

In addition, all eligible employees must meet the following criteria:

- Been employed by the Executive Branch of the Federal Government for, at least, the last three (3) consecutive years.

- Served continuously in the Department of Justice since December 28, 2009.
- Served continuously in a covered HRD, SecD, or ITB position since April 16, 2010, under a permanent appointment with a regularly scheduled tour of duty (excluding individuals currently serving in a GS-X99 Student Trainee, GS-0083 Police Officer, GS-132 Intelligence Analyst, GS-1811 Special Agent, GS-1601 General Facilities and Equipment, GS-1640 Facility Management, or SES position).

6. If I meet the service requirements for an incentive payment, are there other restrictions that could prevent me from receiving the payment?

Yes. An employee who meets any of the following criteria is excluded from receiving the incentive payment:

- Is a reemployed annuitant;
- Meets the eligibility requirements for a disability retirement under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS);
- Is in receipt of a decision notice of involuntary separation for misconduct or unacceptable performance;
- Has previously received a voluntary separation incentive payment from the Federal Government;
- During the 36-month period preceding the date of separation, performed service for which a student loan repayment benefit was paid, or is to be paid;
- During the 24-month period preceding the date of separation, performed service for which a recruitment or relocation incentive was paid, or is to be paid;
- During the 12-month period preceding the date of separation, performed service for which a retention incentive was paid, or is to be paid; or
- Moves to a position not covered under this VSIP authority prior to separation under this authority.

7. Am I eligible for the incentive payment and/or early voluntary retirement if I am receiving Workers Compensation?

An employee receiving workers compensation is eligible for the incentive payment and/or early retirement as long as he/she is in a position covered by the incentive payment and/or early retirement authority and the employee is otherwise eligible. Employees who are eligible for a disability retirement under FERS or CSRS are not eligible.

8. Am I required to take the incentive payment?

No. The acceptance of an incentive payment is strictly voluntary.

9. Am I ineligible for the VERA/VSIP if I am currently serving on a service agreement, or recently received a retention incentive?

An employee is not eligible if currently serving during:

- the 24-month period for which a recruitment or relocation incentive/bonus was paid or is to be paid
- the 12-month period for which a retention incentive/bonus was paid or is to be paid
- the 36-month period for which a student loan repayment benefit was paid or is to be paid

However, there are two ways employees currently serving under a service agreement (or within a 12-month period for which a retention incentive/bonus was made) that otherwise meets the early retirement eligibility requirements, may retire under the early retirement opportunity. They may:

- repay the incentive based on applicable proration for time already performed, or;
- receive an approved waiver of repayment made by the Human Resources Officer, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Government, and the employee is otherwise eligible.